

The Influence of Brand Anthropomorphism on Brand Attitude

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Abstract

With the development of digital marketing, diverse marketing methods have emerged. This paper explores one of them: brand anthropomorphism. This paper investigates brand anthropomorphism by distributing questionnaires to collect data and analyzing the data through SPSS26 and AMOS26. Firstly, the paper studies the effect of brand anthropomorphism on brand attitudes is initially studied. Then, the influence of brand anthropomorphism on brand attitudes was further explored by classifying brand anthropomorphism into two types (warmth and competence) in conjunction with the stereotype content model. Additionally, the paper compares the combination of brand anthropomorphism when the types (warmth and competence) of the two dimensions (IMC and INC) are inconsistent and consistent, and examines which combination is more influential to consumers. Finally, the results indicate that brand anthropomorphism can positively influence brand attitudes regardless of the combination. Additionally, more detailed findings show that when the two dimensions of brand anthropomorphism are consistent and both convey warmth, they are more likely to positively influence consumer attitudes. However, when the two dimensions of brand anthropomorphism are inconsistent, the brand anthropomorphism of IMC (warmth) and INC (competence) is more likely to influence consumers' brand attitudes positively. The paper concludes by offering suggestions based on the research results.

Keywords: Brand Anthropomorphism, Brand Communication, Brand Attitudes,
Digital Marketing Communication

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Introduction

Background

In recent years, with the development of information communication technology, a variety of marketing methods have emerged, and the communication of information tends to be homogenized. And with the continuous improvement of social level, consumers have more and more autonomy to choose brands. It has become particularly important for brands to shape their own image and how to maintain their relationship with consumers. Harrigan et al. (2018) suggest that shaping a strongly connected consumer-brand relationship is important for brands to develop a sustainable competitive advantage. Aggarwal and McGill (2012) showed that consumers tend to show a natural affinity for human-like objects based on social attributes, the tendency to give human-like characteristics to the real or imagined behavior of non-human agents is called anthropomorphism, and that anthropomorphic marketing techniques help consumers feel closer to the brand by making them feel more connected to it and contribute to positive brand attitudes. Later, Li Yanjia (2021) confirmed that different types of brand anthropomorphism have a positive impact on consumers' brand attitudes. As a result, many brands are now using anthropomorphism as one of their common marketing tools to enhance consumer attitudes toward their brands. Initially, brands incorporated many anthropomorphic elements in the design of their product images. For example, when designing the front of a car, brands designed the grille with an upward curve so that people would look like they were smiling. Later on, more and more brands are adding anthropomorphic elements to their brand identity. For example, M&M chocolate beans, a well-known brand of chocolate beans created by Mars Incorporated and Hershey's Company in the United States, the brand's chocolate beans are presented in the advertisement as chocolate beans with different personalities and limbs; BarBQPlaza is a famous chain of Thai barbecue brands, the brand image of BarBQPlaza Thailand is an anthropomorphic image of a dragon, which is fun and appealing to consumers. In addition, many official brand images also use anthropomorphic logos, such as a smiling face on the new amazing Thailand logo of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). Brand anthropomorphism varies across national cultures. Brand anthropomorphism like this is very common in life, this means that brands create different types of brand anthropomorphism. Some scholars have explored the impact of different types of anthropomorphic brand images on consumers, for example, Chen Zengxiang and Yang

Guangyu (2017) found that different types of anthropomorphic brand images have different impacts on consumers with different attribution needs. Ye Weiling and Shi Tianfeng (2020) studied the impact of different cute types of brand anthropomorphism on consumers' perceptions of brand quality based on the stereotype content model. However, most scholars only take brand anthropomorphism as a whole to study the influence of brand anthropomorphism on brand attitudes, but do not study in detail what types of brand anthropomorphism can influence brand attitudes more, so this paper will combine the two dimensions of brand anthropomorphism and two types from the stereotype content model to investigate the influence of brand anthropomorphism on brand attitudes more deeply.



Figure1: Anthropomorphic Examples of BarBQPlaza. “BarBQ PlazaRefill promotion is back! Up to 54 kinds of ingredients for you to eat!” 2019.

Source: <https://www.leesharing.com/barbq-plaza-refill-march/>



Figure 2: Anthropomorphic Examples of M&M. “Come to the bowl! Why have people loved M&M's chocolate beans for over 20 years?” by Wu Qi, 2022.

Source: <https://s3.ifanr.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/006.jpg>

Questions of Research

In this paper, we want to explore brand anthropomorphism in depth, from different dimensions and different types of anthropomorphism on consumers' brand attitudes. The question are as follows:

Q1: Can different combinations of both dimensions and both types of brand anthropomorphism positively influence brand attitudes?

Q2: When the both dimensions of brand anthropomorphism is consistent or inconsistent in type, whether the inconsistent combination could more positively influence consumers' brand attitudes?

Q3: When the both dimensions of brand anthropomorphism are consistent in type, whether the both dimensions are warmth type of brand anthropomorphism could more positively influence consumers' brand attitudes?

Q4: When the both dimensions of brand anthropomorphism are inconsistent in type, which combinations of brand anthropomorphism influence brand attitudes better?

Significance of Research

With the widespread use of brand anthropomorphic marketing tools, scholars have conducted extensive research in different fields, exploring the mechanisms, effects, and various aspects of brand anthropomorphism's impact on consumers. However, most studies on brand anthropomorphism focus solely on its impact on consumers. Therefore, in this paper, we aim to examine the combined effect of the two dimensions and types of brand anthropomorphism on consumers' attitudes, drawing on the stereotype content model. Brand anthropomorphism can be divided into impression clues (IMC) and interactive clues (INC). This paper investigates the impact of different combinations of these dimensions and types on brand attitudes, seeking to identify which combination is more likely to positively influence consumer brand attitudes. The findings of this research will contribute to enriching the academic understanding of brand anthropomorphism and providing practical recommendations for brands in a comprehensive manner. Moreover, brand anthropomorphism, especially when used in conjunction with online brands, often involves showcasing the anthropomorphic brand image and engaging with consumers through social media. Therefore, studying brand anthropomorphism can provide a stronger theoretical foundation for digital marketing strategies. In summary, in this information age of rapid information communication and the emergence of a variety of innovative

communication methods, this paper provides a clearer path for brands that want to utilize brand anthropomorphism for media promotion through an in-depth exploration of brand anthropomorphism.

Literature Review

Stereotype Content Model (SCM)

The Stereotype Content Model (SCM) was proposed by Fiske et al. (2018) and the SCM is supported by a number of empirical studies in different cultural samples. Fiske et al. began to develop the idea of the SCM in 1999 and then continued to refine it. Fiske et al. (2018) studied the stereotype content model using interpersonal and group interactions as a division criterion, based on the social perception dimensions into competence and warmth. The "warmth" dimension answers the question of the likelihood that others will be kind to one's self, and those who are perceived as sincere, friendly, and trustworthy are usually considered warmth types. The "competence" dimension answers the question of whether others are competent of carrying out their intentions, and those who are perceived to be efficient, intelligent, and skillful are usually considered to be competence types. Scholars in different fields have used its division into "warmth" and "competence" to study each field to varying degrees. In the field of anthropomorphic marketing, scholars such as Kervyn et al. (2012) have classified individual subjective perceptions into "intention" and "competence" to study their influence on consumers' perceptions of brand anthropomorphism. According to the stereotypical content model, Yanjia Li (2021) classified anthropomorphic communication into "warmth" and "competence" to study its influence on consumers' brand attitudes. This paper will draw on the two dimensions of SCM's warmth and competence.

Brand Anthropomorphism

Anthropomorphism refers to "The tendency to imbue the real or imagined behavior of nonhuman agents with humanlike characteristics, motivations, intentions, or emotions" (Epley, Waytz, & Cacioppo, 2007). In the study of brand anthropomorphism, Guido (2015) defines brand anthropomorphism is "the brand or product has the same emotional, spiritual and behavioral social characteristics as human beings". In this information age,

many companies market their brands by this giving human emotions and behaviors to their brands or products. Wang Chun (2020) argues that a successful brand anthropomorphism strategy can be a good way to establish a connection between the brand and the consumer and can lead to a good attitude towards that brand.

Wang Xuhui and Feng Wenqi(2016) divided brand anthropomorphism into impression clues(IMC) and interactive clues(INC).Impression Clues (IMC) for brand anthropomorphism are defined as the design elements of text, images, pre-recorded videos and voice that can cause consumers to be anthropomorphic, which is a one-way information flow; Interactive Clues (INC) for brand anthropomorphism are defined as the interactive elements of verbal communication, emotional communication, knowledge sharing and brand activities that can cause consumers to be anthropomorphic, which is a two-way information flow.

Brand Attitude

Brand attitude is the habitual tendency of consumers to react to a brand in a like or dislike manner, acquired through learning and reinforcement, and is the basis for forming consumers' brand behavior. Rosenberg and Hoaland constructed the ABC model of attitude, which is a combination of affective, cognitive, and behavioral dispositions, and suggested that behavioral factors are the mental activities or behavioral tendencies that precede a person's actions. It generally refers to an individual's overall evaluation of the degree to which a brand satisfies a need. Thus, brand attitudes include three components: cognitive, affective, and behavioral dispositions.

Hypothesis and Model Construction

Many studies have been conducted on the relationship between brand anthropomorphism and brand attitudes, including studies on the relationship between two dimensions of brand anthropomorphism and brand attitudes.

On the relationship between brand anthropomorphism and brand attitude in impression clues (IMC), many scholars have conducted different studies on it. Meang and Aggarwal (2018) studied the effect of the "face" aspect ratio of products on consumers' product evaluation and concluded that products with high "face" aspect ratios are more liked by consumers and consumers are more willing to pay. The study concluded that products with higher aspect

ratios are more popular and consumers are more willing to pay. Xie et al. (2017) showed that products with a different image would lead to better brand attitudes among individuals with high luxury. Zhang Yu's (2019) study pointed out that when companies develop anthropomorphic marketing strategies, anthropomorphic images can be adjusted according to the attributes or benefit messages of the products, and the degree of matching between them significantly affects consumers' cognitive fluency and subsequently has an impact on individuals' brand attitudes and intentions. This paper argues that the anthropomorphic image of a brand influences consumers' perceptions of the brand and thus influences their perceptions and attitudes toward the brand.

The relationship between brand anthropomorphism and brand attitudes in interactive clues (INC). Aaker (1997) likens the development of a brand to a person's life experience and tells the life story of the brand in anthropomorphic terms so that consumers can relate to it. In addition, brand personality congruence theory suggests that if the personalities of both consumers and brands match each other, it tends to promote a favored, positive response to the brand and prompt consumers to form a positive evaluation of the product (Dong, Xiangdong, and Xue, Yunjian, 2018). Therefore, this paper argues that brands influence consumers' psychology through anthropomorphism at the internal level, making consumers feel empathetic to the point of influencing consumers' brand attitudes. Li Wei et al. (2021) showed that anthropomorphic brands can influence residents' environmental behaviors based on the information framework, in terms of positive or negative representations when communicating with consumers. In summary, the anthropomorphism of interactive clues (INC) basically influences brand attitudes in the long term from the multi-frequency communication style and playing social roles.

In addition, in this time of rapid information dissemination and complex marketing techniques, many brands are promoting their brands by combining multi-dimensional anthropomorphic means. Finally, the following hypothesis is proposed by combining the stereotype content model to classify brand anthropomorphism into "warmth" and "competence".

H1a Both impression clues (IMC) and interactive clues (INC) of brand anthropomorphism have positive effects on consumers' brand attitudes when both dimensions are of the competence type.

H1b Both impression clues (IMC) and interactive clues (INC) of brand anthropomorphism have positive effects on consumers' brand attitude when both dimensions are of the type of warmth.

H1c Brand anthropomorphic impression clues (IMC) of warmth type and interactive clues (INC) of competence type have positive effects on consumers' brand attitude.

H1d Brand anthropomorphic impression clues (IMC) of competence type and interactive clues (INC) of warmth type have positive effects on consumers' brand attitudes.

H2 Consumers' attitudes are more positive in the case of inconsistent brand anthropomorphism compared to the case of consistent brand anthropomorphism.

H3 In the case of consistent brand anthropomorphism, the warm brand anthropomorphism is more likely to influence consumers positively

H4 In the case of inconsistent brand anthropomorphism, the combination of IMC (competence) x INC (warmth) is more likely to influence consumers positively.

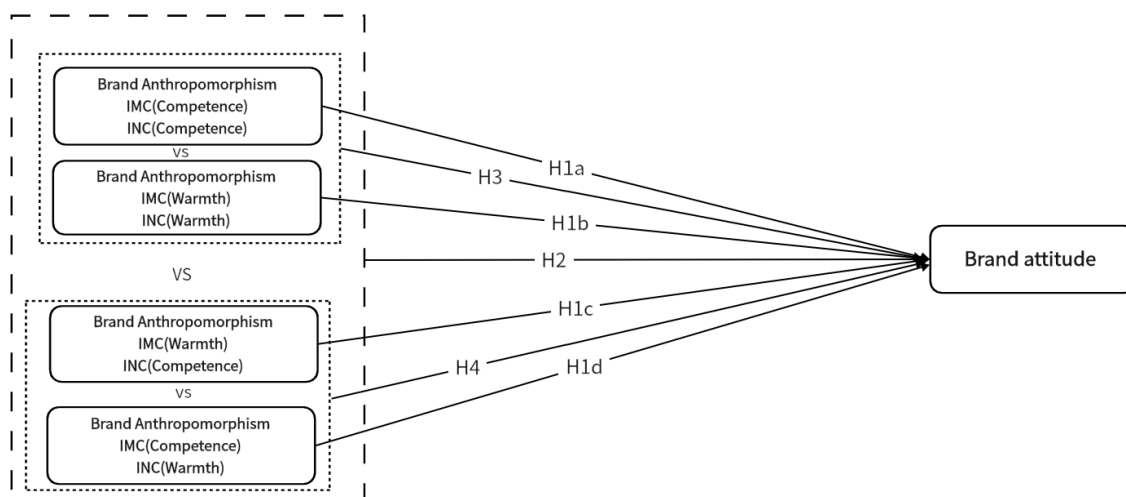


Figure 3: Hypothesis Model

Research Methodology

Questionnaire Design

In this paper, four different sets of anthropomorphic materials will be presented to each of the four groups, this study will mainly use 2*2 subject groups for the survey and the subjects will be randomly assigned to four experimental groups. The study will provide different combination of types (warmth and competence) and dimensions (IMC and INC) for the four subject groups. The four subject groups are as follows: the first one is the anthropomorphic experimental design in which both the logo and communication words are competence; the second one is the anthropomorphic experimental design in which both the logo and communication words are warmth; the third one is the experimental design in which the logo is warmth and the communication words is competence; the fourth one is the experimental design in which logo is competence and the communication words is warmth. The respondents will read the four different materials and do the corresponding questionnaire questions in order. The measurement scales of the variables in this paper are based on the more mature scales of the leading scholars in the field. The questionnaire format will mainly use Likert's 7-point scale to measure anthropomorphic perception and brand attitude.

Measurement of Variables

Table 1: Brand Anthropomorphism Measurement Scale

| Dimension | Title Contents | Number |
|---|--|--------|
| Impression clues (IMC) <i>(Wang Xvhui and Feng Wenqi,2016)</i> | The brand has a human-like appearance | IMC 1 |
| | The brand is life-like | IMC 2 |
| | The brand looks human-like | IMC 3 |
| Interactive clues (INC) <i>(Wang Xvhui and Feng Wenqi,2016)</i> | The brand can communicate like a human | INC 1 |
| | The brand has its own ideology | INC 2 |
| | The brand has the ability to experience emotions | INC 3 |
| | The brand has free will | INC 4 |

Table 2: Consumer Brand Attitude Scale Questions

| Variables | Dimension | Title Contents | Number |
|---|-----------|--|--------|
| Brand Attitude <i>(Zhang Yuntang, 2016)</i> | Cognition | 1.The brand is very good | C1 |
| | | 2.The brand is good value for money | C2 |
| | | 3.The brand is satisfactory | C3 |
| | Affection | 1. I like the brand | C4 |
| | | 2.Trust the brand | C5 |
| | | 3. Strong interest in similar brands | C6 |
| | Behavior | 1.The possibility of buying the brand is very high | C7 |
| | | 2.When buying such products, we will give priority to this brand | C8 |
| | | 3. Willing to pay a higher price for the brand's products | C9 |

Research Methods

In this paper, the data was collected mainly by means of a questionnaire and the survey for this study was mainly derived from the Chinese people, distributed online through WeChat and QQ. These two platforms were chosen because, according to China New Media Development Report (2021), they were the top two users of Social Media applications. Therefore, combining these two social media can be a good way to distribute the questionnaire and collect effective and rich data, and it was easy to distribute using QQ and WeChat to Chinese people, who were the target population of the research.

The sample technique used the formula $n = (u \cdot \sigma / d)^2$ to calculate the minimum sample size, where the maximum acceptable absolute error is 0.5, the standard deviation is approximately 4.5, and the confidence level is required to be 95% ($= 0.05$). The minimum sample size required is $n_{min} = (1.96 \cdot 4.5 / 0.5)^2 = 312$. The experiment was divided into four groups, so it was expected that more than 400 questionnaires would be distributed. The questionnaires were distributed randomly online to ensure that the sample was as representative and random as possible. In this study, participants were motivated to fill out the questionnaire by being given red packets.

Data Analysis

The following will be commonly used as an abbreviation for two terms: the first one is impression clues (IMC), another is Interaction clues (INC).

Pre-Experiment

A T-test was conducted to verify the differences in the perceptions of warmth and competence between the two brands of the experimental material. Table 3 indicates the success of the manipulation of the warmth and competence brand anthropomorphic image.

Table 3: Manipulation Test of Warmth and Competence Brand Image

| T-test analysis results | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|------------------------|-------|---------|
| | Brand anthropomorphic image (mean ± standard deviation) | | t | p |
| | Warmth group(n=13) | Competence group(n=14) | | |
| Warmth Perception | 14.38±2.40 | 7.43±2.14 | .966 | 0.000** |
| Competence Perception | 8.46±1.85 | 14.14±1.99 | 7.650 | 0.000** |

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01

Table 4: Tests for Warmth and Competence Anthropomorphic Communication

| | Brand anthropomorphic communication (mean ± standard deviation) | | t | p |
|-----------------------|---|------------------------|-------|---------|
| | Warmth group(n=13) | Competence group(n=13) | | |
| Warmth Perception | 15.46±2.67 | 7.15±1.95 | 9.068 | 0.000** |
| Competence Perception | 7.54±2.50 | 14.92±2.47 | 7.578 | 0.000** |

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01

From the above table 4, we can see that the two brand anthropomorphic communication samples showed significant ($p < 0.05$) for both warmth and competence perceptions, which meant that there was a difference between brand anthropomorphic communication samples for both warmth and competence perceptions. Indicating that the experimental material for warmth and competence anthropomorphic communication was successfully manipulated.

Reliability Test

The reliability of the questionnaire was analyzed. The data from the survey were tested for reliability using SPSS 26 software. The Cronbach's α coefficients of three variables, namely, brand anthropomorphism and consumer brand attitude, were all greater than 0.9, indicating that the consistency and stability of the formal survey questionnaire were excellent, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Reliability Analysis

| Variables | Number of measurement questions | cronbach α |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Brand anthropomorphism | 7 | 0.942 |
| Consumer brand attitude | 9 | 0.957 |

Validity Tests

The questionnaire was tested for validity. For scale validity SPSS26 pair and AMOS 26 software were used to test the validity of the scale from two aspects. First, an exploratory factor root system was conducted for the three variables using SPSS26, and then a validation factor analysis was conducted for the three variables using AMOS26. Brand anthropomorphism, the results show that the KMO value was 0.939, and the p-value of Bartlett's sphericity test was less than 0.001, indicating that the brand anthropomorphism scale has good validity, as shown in Table 6. Then, on the basis of exploratory factor analysis on brand anthropomorphism, the brand anthropomorphism model was further constructed using AMOS 26 (Figure 4), and the validation factor analysis was done to find that $\chi^2 / df < 5$, RMSEA was less than 0.1, and NFI to CFI were greater than 0.9. The above data indicated that they all reached the range of fit indices indicating a good fit, and the results are detailed in Table 7.

Table 6: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Brand Anthropomorphism

| | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|----------|
| KMO Sampling suitability number. | | .939 |
| Bartlett's sphericity test | Approximate chi square | 2062.859 |
| | Degree of freedom | 21 |
| | Significance | .000 |

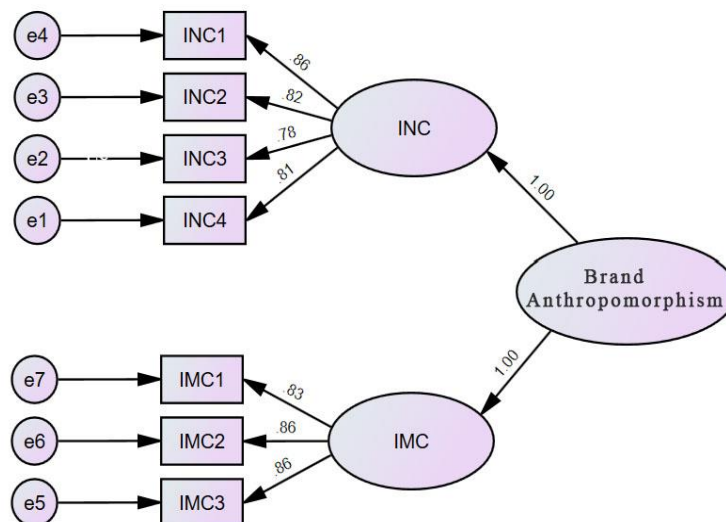


Figure 4: Validated Factor Analysis Model for Brand Anthropomorphism

Table 7: Goodness-of-fit Indicators for Brand Anthropomorphism

| Fitting index | χ^2 / df | RMSEA | CFI | IFI | TLI | CFI |
|---------------|---------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 3.395 | 0.081 | 0.980 | 0.966 | 0.986 | 0.976 |

Brand attitude results shows that the KMO value was 0.967 and the significance p-value of Bartlett's sphericity test was less than 0.001, which indicates that the brand attitude scale has good validity, as shown in Table 8. Then, based on the exploratory factor analysis of brand attitude, the brand attitude model was further constructed using AMOS 26 (Figure 5), and the validation factor analysis was done on it and found that $\chi^2 / df < 5$, RMSEA was less than 0.1, and NFI to CFI were greater than 0.9, and the above data indicated that they all reached the fit index range indicating a good fit, and the results are detailed in Table 9.

Table 8: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Brand Attitude

| | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|----------|
| KMO Sampling suitability number. | | .967 |
| Bartlett's sphericity test | Approximate chi square | 2970.776 |
| | Degree of freedom | 36 |
| | Significance | .000 |

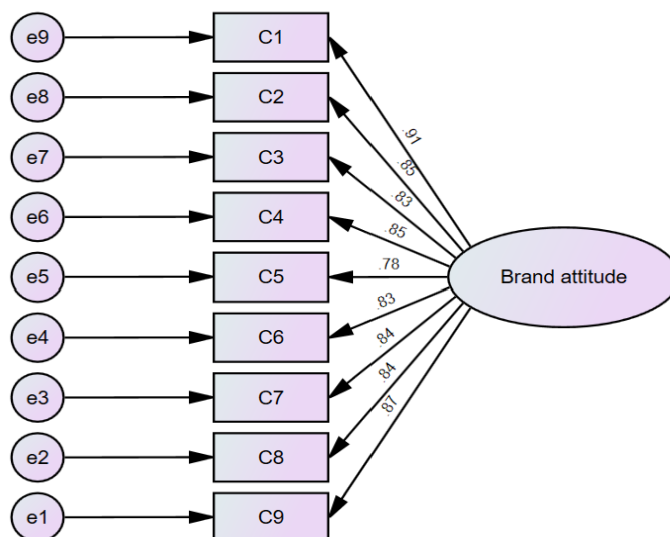


Figure 5: Validated Factor Analysis Model of Brand Attitude

Table 9: Goodness-of-fit Indicators for Brand Attitudes

| Fitting index | χ^2/df | RMSEA | NFI | IFI | TLI | CFI |
|---------------|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | .187 | 0.023 | 0.989 | 0.998 | 0.998 | 0.998 |

Formal Experiment

The results were shown in Table10 to Table13, and the Pearson correlation coefficient of Group1 was 0.620, the Pearson correlation coefficient of Group2 was 0.481, the Pearson correlation coefficient of Group3 was 0.256, the Pearson correlation coefficient of Group4 was 0.556. The above results indicated that the brand anthropomorphism and brand attitude in Group1, Group2, Group3 and Group4 were positively correlated.

Table 10: Brand Anthropomorphism and Brand Attitude Correlation Test for Group 1

| | Brand attitude | Brand anthropomorphism |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Brand attitude | Pearson Correlation | 1 |
| | Sig. | .620** |
| | Number of cases | 90 |
| Brand anthropomorphism | Pearson Correlation | .620** |
| | Sig. | 1 |
| | Number of cases | 90 |

** . Significant correlation at the 0.01 level.

Table 11: Brand Anthropomorphism and Brand Attitude Correlation Test for Group 2

| | Brand attitude | Brand anthropomorphism |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Brand attitude | Pearson Correlation | 1 |
| | Sig. | .481** |
| | Number of cases | 92 |
| Brand anthropomorphism | Pearson Correlation | .481** |
| | Sig. | 1 |
| | Number of cases | 92 |

Table 12: Brand Anthropomorphism and Brand Attitude Correlation Test for Group 3

| | Brand attitude | Brand anthropomorphism |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Brand attitude | Pearson Correlation | 1 |
| | Sig. | .256* |
| | Number of cases | 92 |
| Brand anthropomorphism | Pearson Correlation | .256* |
| | Sig. | 1 |
| | Number of cases | 92 |

Table 13: Brand Anthropomorphism and Brand Attitude Correlation Test for Group 4

| | | Brand attitude | Brand anthropomorphism |
|------------------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Brand attitude | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .556** |
| | Sig. | | .000 |
| | Number of cases | 89 | 89 |
| Brand anthropomorphism | Pearson Correlation | .556** | 1 |
| | Sig. | .000 | |
| | Number of cases | 89 | 89 |

The above correlation tests for the two variables of brand anthropomorphism and brand attitude for each of the four groups were conducted to prepare the ground for further regression analysis. The results of the regression analysis of the two variables of brand anthropomorphism and brand attitude for the four groups were viewed, and the results are shown in Table14. Firstly, the significant p-values of experimental group one to experimental group four were less than 0.05, which indicated that the four independent variables of brand anthropomorphism for the four experimental groups positively affect brand attitude. The results of this experiment indicated that H1a, H1b, H1c and H1d held.

Table 14: Regression Analysis of Brand Anthropomorphism and Brand Attitude

| | Coefficient | | | | t | Significance |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|------|-------|--------------|
| | Unstandardized coefficient | | Standardization coefficient | Beta | | |
| | B | Standard error | | | | |
| Brand anthropomorphism (Group 1) | .659 | .089 | .620 | | 7.418 | .000 |
| Brand anthropomorphism (Group 2) | .417 | .080 | .481 | | 5.209 | .000 |
| Brand anthropomorphism (Group 3) | .217 | .086 | .256 | | 2.508 | .014 |
| Brand anthropomorphism (Group 4) | .554 | .089 | .556 | | 6.244 | .000 |

a. Dependent variable: brand attitude

In order to test hypothesis 2, hypothesis 3 and hypothesis 4, this paper combined different experimental groups and then conducted ANOVA so that the effect of different combinations of brand anthropomorphism on brand attitude could be investigated.

First, hypothesis 2 was tested by dividing the experimental group of brand anthropomorphism with the same type of IMC and INC in two dimensions into one group (type consistent group) and the experimental group of brand anthropomorphism with different types of IMC and INC in two dimensions into one group (type inconsistent group). Then the two groups were subjected to independent samples t-test and the results were shown in Table 15. And $p < 0.05$ indicated that there was a significant difference between the two dimensions of brand anthropomorphism when the types were consistent and inconsistent. Comparing the type-inconsistent group with the type-consistent group, the results were shown in Figure 6, $M = 3.67$ for the type-inconsistent group and $M = 4.94 > 3.67$ for the type-consistent group, indicating that consumers' brand attitudes were more positive when the two dimensions of brand anthropomorphism were consistent compared to when the two dimensions of brand anthropomorphism were inconsistent. The above results indicate that hypothesis 2 was not valid.

Table 15: Brand Anthropomorphism Type Independent Sample Test

| Variables | F | SIG. |
|--|--------|------|
| Brand anthropomorphism type (consistent/inconsistent) | 23.473 | .000 |

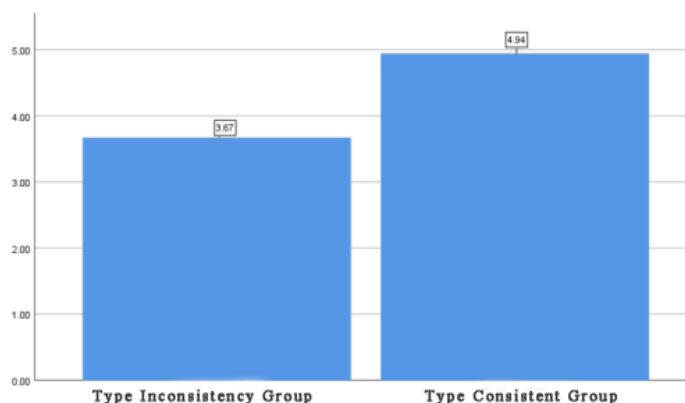


Figure 6: Comparison of Brand Attitude Means

The second was to test hypothesis 3, which is to compare the two types of brand anthropomorphism, warm and competent, when the two dimensions of brand anthropomorphism were the same, and to investigate whether consumers' brand attitudes were more positive in that case. The results of the independent samples t-test for both groups were shown in Table 16. The $0.05 < p < 0.1$ indicated that when the two dimensions of brand mimicry were consistent, the difference between the warmth group and the competence group was certain. The results were shown in Figure 7, where $M=4.80$ for the ability group and $M=5.08 > 4.80$ for the warm group, indicating that consumers' brand attitude was more positive when both IMC and INC were warm when the two dimensions of brand anthropomorphism were of the same type. The above result hypothesis 3 held.

Table 16: Brand Anthropomorphism Type Independent Sample Test

| Variables | F | SIG. |
|--|-------|------|
| Brand anthropomorphism type (warmth/competence) | 1.068 | .059 |

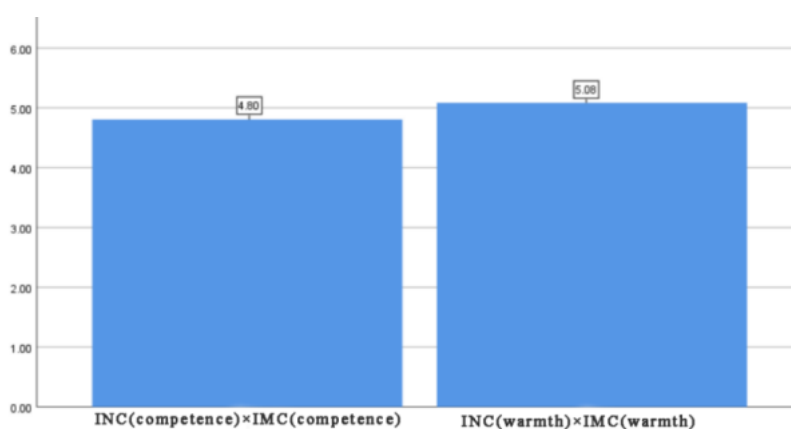


Figure 7: Comparison of Brand Attitude Means

Finally, hypothesis 4 was tested by comparing two different types of combinations of IMC (Warmth) × INC (Competence) and IMC (Competence) × INC (Warmth) when the two dimensions of brand anthropomorphism were inconsistent, and exploring whether consumers' brand attitudes were more positive in that case. The results of the independent samples t-test for the two groups were shown in Table 17. $p < 0.05$ indicated that there was a significant difference between the two different combinations of brand anthropomorphism types when

the two dimensions of brand anthropomorphism were inconsistent. Comparing IMC(Warmth)×INC(Competence) and IMC(Competence)×INC(Warmth), that is, comparing experimental group three and experimental group four, the specific results were shown in Figure 8, IMC(Warmth)×INC(Competence) group M=4.45, IMC(Competence) × INC (Warmth) M=2.87<4.45, indicating that when the two dimension types of brand anthropomorphism were not consistent, when IMC was Warmth and INC was Competence, the consumers' brand attitude was more positive. Therefore, hypothesis 4 was not valid.

Table 17: Brand Anthropomorphism Type Independent Sample Test

| Variables | F | SIG. |
|---------------------------------|------|------|
| Brand anthropomorphism type | | |
| IMC (Warmth) × INC (Competence) | .028 | .000 |
| IMC (Competence) × INC (Warmth) | | |

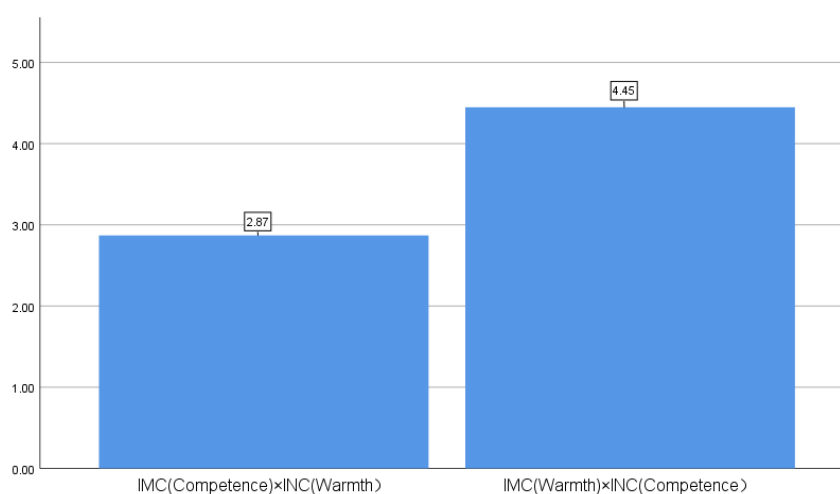


Figure 8: Comparison of Brand Attitude Means

Table 18: Summary of hypothetical results

| Hypothesis | Results |
|--|---------------|
| H1a Both impression clues (IMC) and interactive clues (INC) of brand anthropomorphism have positive effects on consumers' brand attitudes when both dimensions are of the competence type. | Supported |
| H1b Both impression clues (IMC) and interactive clues (INC) of brand anthropomorphism have a positive effect on consumers' brand attitude when both dimensions are of the type of warmth. | Supported |
| H1c Brand anthropomorphic impression clues (IMC) of warmth type and interactive clues (INC) of competence type have a positive effects on consumers' brand attitude. | Supported |
| H1d Brand anthropomorphic impression clues (IMC) are of the competence type and interactive clues (INC) are of the warmth type to positively influence consumers' brand attitudes. | Supported |
| H2 Consumers' attitudes are more positive in the case of inconsistent brand anthropomorphism compared to the case of consistent brand anthropomorphism. | Not supported |
| H3 In the case of consistent brand anthropomorphism, the warm brand anthropomorphism is more likely to influence consumers positively. | Supported |
| H4 In the case of inconsistent brand anthropomorphism, the combination of IMC (competence) × INC (warmth) is more likely to influence consumers positively. | Not supported |

Conclusion and Discussion

This paper presents research hypotheses by reviewing previous literature, summarizing and concluding, and then combining them with observations of the current state of brand anthropomorphism. The paper focuses on the influence of the internal dimensions of brand anthropomorphism on brand attitudes. In this study, the two main variables of brand anthropomorphism and brand attitude were collected by selecting and modifying established scales from domestic and international sources. The questionnaire and experimental materials underwent pre-testing before the formal survey to ensure questionnaire reliability. The

collected data were then analyzed using SPSS 26 and AMOS 26, leading to the final conclusions.

First, brand anthropomorphism has a significant effect on consumers' brand attitudes. Regardless of whether the types (warmth and competence) of the two dimensions (IMC & INC) of brand anthropomorphism were consistent or inconsistent, or whether the types of the two dimensions were warm or competent, brand anthropomorphism had a positive effect on consumers' brand attitudes. This paper combines two dimensions (IMC and INC) and two types (warmth and competence) of brand anthropomorphism and examines the relationship between brand anthropomorphism and brand attitude as a whole. The study found that brand anthropomorphism can have a positive effect on brand attitude when both dimensions (IMC and INC) are either warmth or competence; either the combination of IMC (warmth) and INC (competence) or the combination of IMC (competence) and INC (competence) can have a positive effect on brand attitude. Combined with the above discussion of the results of this paper's analysis, this paper can tentatively conclude that whatever the combination of the types of images and personalities of brand anthropomorphism can have a positive impact on brand attitudes.

Secondly, comparing the inconsistent anthropomorphism and the consistent anthropomorphism, the consistent anthropomorphism of both dimensions (IMC&INC) can positively influence consumers' brand attitudes. When comparing the inconsistency between the external image and personality of the brand anthropomorphism and the consistency between the external image of the brand and the personality of the communication with consumers, the brand attitude of consumers will be more positive when the external image and personality of the brand is consistent. This paper originally argued that the inconsistency between the two dimensions of brand anthropomorphism (IMC and INC) will bring consumers a sense of novelty, just like the sense of contrast we often talk about in life, which is explained by the contrast effect in psychology. The contrast effect is also known as sensory contrast, such as eating sour food first and then sweet food, will feel the latter sweeter, or when people are cold, a slight increase in temperature will obviously feel warm, or personal appearance is different from the inside to create a sense of surprise and humor. Moreover, the greater the difference in contrast, the more profound impression people will feel. Therefore, this paper originally argued that if brand anthropomorphism uses such a sense of contrast, it may deepen consumers' impressions of their brands and thus influence their brand attitudes. However, it

is clear from the results of this paper that consumers prefer brand anthropomorphism with a consistent brand image and interactive personality.

Third, in order to explore more detailed results, this paper also conducts a more in-depth investigation of brand anthropomorphism by combining the stereotypical content impression model with the classification of brand anthropomorphism. Firstly, we compare the two types of brand anthropomorphism (IMC and INC) with the same type of brand anthropomorphism warmth and competence type. In addition, if the two types of brand anthropomorphism are not consistent, consumers' attitudes are more positive when the IMC of brand anthropomorphism is warmth type and INC is competence.

Recommendation

Practical Recommendations

Based on the above discussion of the research results, the following suggestions are made for brands that want to use brand anthropomorphism to promote their products: For brands with hedonistic products, they should try to choose a brand image and brand interaction personality consistent with the warmth type of brand anthropomorphism marketing strategy. For brands with functional products, it is recommended that they choose a brand image and brand interaction personality consistent with the competence type of brand anthropomorphic marketing strategy. If such product brands want to reflect their functional attributes while creating a warm feeling, it is suggested that they choose a brand image design representing warmth and an interaction personality representing competence. This way, both aspects can be taken into account.

Academic Recommendations

In terms of theory, although this paper makes up for the part of longitudinal research on brand anthropomorphism and provides an in-depth analysis of brand anthropomorphism, this paper only focuses on the impact of the type of brand anthropomorphism on brand attitudes in depth, but in general does not add more other influencing factors to explore. In real life, there are many different situations, such as the existence of different types of products, different ways of communication and presentation. Therefore, this paper suggests that future research can enrich this theory by adding more factors to the study of the

relationship between brand anthropomorphism and consumers, so that more valuable theories can be proposed through the study.

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Factors Influencing Vietnamese Men's Buying Intention on Personal Care on E-commerce Platforms During Big Online Shopping Events

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Abstract

Since the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, people have steadily migrated to online buying, which has accelerated the development of e-commerce in Vietnam. The shift in consumer behavior from physical to online shopping and the use of e-commerce platforms have altered modern marketing. The study focuses on identifying the factors influencing Vietnamese men's propensity to purchase personal care at big online shopping events on e-commerce platforms. In research methodology, the study blended the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) with practical observation. The factors that influence and develop male consumers' buying intentions are perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, social media influence, advertising appeals, sales promotions, and timing. 619 valid respondents were collected from North to South Vietnam using online survey questionnaires, allowing researchers to conveniently collect quantitative data. The effect of each factor and its influence on buying intention were determined by Descriptive Statistics and Linear Regression Analysis to identify six research hypotheses. Creative sales promotion (CSP), timing (TM), Social media influences (SMI), and advertising appeals (AA), have direct impacts on Vietnamese men's personal care products buying intentions during big online shopping events on e-commerce platforms; meanwhile, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use have little effect. The findings provided insights to help marketers and strategists achieve their business objectives.

Keywords: Vietnamese Male, Personal Care, E-commerce, Online Shopping, TAM Model

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Introduction

According to the Vietnam CDC (2020), Vietnam has been hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the first suspected case on January 13, 2020. Given the pandemic's prevalence, Waldkirch's research has shown that numerous industries have been significantly harmed, affecting many economies around the world. When economies collapse, purchase intentions worsen as people cut back on their buying habits, as seen by statistics from the financial industry (Cox, et al., 2020). Researchers examined the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which was not present when earlier findings were published. As the pandemic continues to influence people's daily lives, businesses are being forced to migrate from offline to online (Schoeman, Bick, & Barnardo, 2021). This quick move to e-commerce or online purchases has affected new consumer behavior, resulting in a fundamental shift in consumer preferences similar to what was observed during the pandemic (Anastasiadou, Chrissos Anestis, Karantza, & Vlachakis, 2020).

According to Wen and team (2011) technology has a significant impact on modifying customer purchasing behavior. Vietnam is predicted to be one of the ASEAN community's fastest-growing e-commerce marketplaces; Vietnam's average income in the first quarter of 2023 was 7.9 million VND per person, up 7.9% (GSO, 2023). The potential for e-commerce in Vietnam is enormous, with an e-commerce penetration rate of 54%, which is greater than the global average of 46.5%. Many international investors in Vietnam are getting more interested in the e-commerce market. The degree of competition is currently fairly high, with a total of 13,510 e-commerce websites in 2017 (Vecita, 2014), a major rise from 9,429 websites in 2016 (Vecita, 2014). To develop an appropriate strategy, businesses and sellers in the sphere of e-commerce must first understand the elements influencing client behavior when buying (Lohse, Bellman, & Johnson, 2000). Notably, companies account for up to 57% of total e-commerce clients in Vietnam, with an average expenditure of 145 USD per person (Vecita, 2014). Mobile phones are the most prevalent internet access device in Vietnam, with 42 million in use and expected to reach 55 million by 2022 (Satista, 2018). According to EVBN (2018) 72% of Vietnam's population presently owns a smartphone, indicating a promising future for e-commerce development.

The revenue earned by entities supplying men's personal care items such as cleansers and sunscreens is included in the men's personal care market. The global men's personal care market is expected to increase at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 9.4% from \$58.06

billion in 2022 to \$63.53 billion in 2023. The global men's personal care industry is predicted to increase at a CAGR of 9.1% to \$90.05 billion by 2027 (Globe News Wire, 2023). According to a Men Stay Simplicity (MSS) market research report, the beauty trend for men in Vietnam has just begun to explode, with the market value of men's cosmetics reaching around 30 million USD, a modest figure when compared to the total value of the cosmetics market for both men and women of \$2.3 billion (Nhịp Cầu Đầu Tư, 2023).

However, in order to better grasp the missing puzzle pieces, the research seeks objective solutions to specific issues. How effective are these elements in persuading or motivating e-commerce platform users to participate in significant online buying events during the pandemic? Will it continue to change based on the same factors that influence customer purchasing intent in the midst of the pandemic? What are the effective and ineffective elements influencing the purchase intentions of Vietnamese males who use e-commerce platforms in online shopping events? Using TAM theory as a foundation, this study employs an objective approach to examine the impact of elements such as perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, advertising appeals, sales promotions, and timing perceived on the purchasing intentions of items of users or consumers on Vietnamese e-commerce platforms. When designing or enhancing successful advertising and promotion methods, this research will aid online firms that are just getting started or aim to enter the online event sales market.

Literature Review:

The transition of online shopping from at-store shopping in Vietnam:

Online shopping is the process of purchasing goods and services from sellers in real-time without the use of intermediary services such as the Internet. Both online and offline purchasing have common product characteristics in the shopping process, such as need identification, information search, evaluation and selection, payment, and post-purchase feedback (Comegys, Hannula, & Väisänen, 2006) (Darley, Blankson, & Luethge, 2015) (Yörük, Dündar, Moga, & Neculita, 2011). Aside from the similarities, online and in-store shopping is affected by various reasons. To begin, offline purchasing requires clients to physically visit the point of sale in order to transact (Nguyen & Ha, 2014). Consumers who shop in person may expend a significant amount of time and effort. However, shopping in this manner allows clients to select the exact product that meets their demands. Traditional shopping's strength is the process of dialogue between sellers and buyers,

which helps customers comprehend the goods and choose the best thing for them (Lester, Forman, & Loyd, 2005). Second, clients can shop online at any time and from any location using internet-connected electronic devices (Nguyen & Ha, 2014). Product descriptions and photographs are supplied to help clients comprehend the product (Lohse, Bellman, & Johnson, 2000) (Kolsar & Galbraith, 2000). Vietnamese customers are increasingly turning to online purchasing, particularly in first-class cities. Users' purchasing habits have quickly shifted in the face of supply chain interruptions and inflation. To provide a consistent buying experience, actively swap across online purchase channels. Vietnam currently contributes 15% of Southeast Asia's entire internet retail market, trailing just Thailand (16%), and is on the level with the Philippines. In 2022, the number of Vietnamese shopping online would exceed 51 million, representing a 13.5% increase over the previous year, with total spending on online shopping reaching 12.42 billion USD (Vneconomy, 2023).

Factors influencing consumers' online shopping:

Cheung (2005) gives a critical and comprehensive analysis of consumer internet behavior theories and empirical evidence. The dominating conceptual framework was recognized as the theory of planned behavior (TPB), the theory of rational action (TRA), and the technology acceptance model (TAM). There are five major categories of factors that affect customers' online activity. The first category includes consumer demographics, attitudes, motivations, perceived risks, and beliefs (Cheung, Chan, & Limayem, 2005). According to Gong (2013), the age, income, education level, and marital status of Chinese customers, as well as their perceived utility, are major indicators of online purchase intention. The second category includes product attributes such as pricing and product type. Through the progression of pricing in the electronic market, Kocas (2002) confirms the importance of price in customers' online shopping. The seller and intermediate features, such as brand, service, privacy, and security restrictions, fall under the third category (Zhou, Dai, & Zhang, 2007). Environmental factors such as exposure, market uncertainty, and competitiveness are included in the fourth category. Moe and Schweidel (Moe & Schweidel, 2012) confirm that online product ratings and reviews have an impact on product sales. The fifth category includes average features such as simplicity of use and information quality. Furthermore, Liu (2004) stated that one of the most critical factors, when people choose to shop online over traditional shopping, is danger. Recently, Ariffin and team (2018) proposed that consumers perceived risk when making an online transaction. There are five danger variables that are perceived. Five perceived risk categories have a considerable negative impact on consumers' online purchasing intention,

while the social risk is determined to be minor. Among these considerations, security concerns are the most common reason why consumers avoid making online purchases.

Hypotheses Development:

Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEU) based on TAM:

Technology improves corporate growth plans and boosts profitability for companies all around the world (Ramayah, 2008). The influence of technology and consumer behavior shape perceived usefulness (Teck, 2002). Perceived utility measures how valuable technology is to customers when they shop online (Davis & Arbor, 1989). The utility is proved via quick online transactions with no waiting time (Davis & Arbor, 1989). Customers like to shop online because they believe it is more convenient than traditional purchasing. When compared to traditional shopping, perceived utility has a direct impact on client purchasing behavior (Teck, 2002). Other factors may impact consumer behavior when shopping online, in addition to the favorable effect of perceived utility (Juniwati, 2014). Customers' purchasing habits are changing as technology advances. Customer adaptability to online buying is indicated by perceived ease of use (Juniwati, 2014). Customer adoption of technology is demonstrated by perceived ease of use (Davis & Arbor, 1989), which also explains easy online shopping behavior (Juniwati, 2014). Many prior research suggested that organizations consider customer experience factors such as service speed, utility upgrades, and consumer accessibility (Seiders & Grewal, 2002), (Forsythe, Liu, Shannon, & Gardner, 2006). Customers prioritize the service that the website delivers since they can access and use it fast and easily. Customers are more likely to use a service when shopping online if the technology makes it simple to use.

Customers value the advantages that technology provides them. Gong (2013) stated that Technology application research is always a key focus for corporate strategic analysts. According to Gitau and Nzuki (Gitau & Nzuki, 2014), simplicity of use is a critical component of the TAM model, and organizations should work to improve their ability to attract customers. Customers are more likely to accept internet services since they respond quickly (Jiang & Yang, 2013).

Therefore, the two first hypothesis is stated as follow:

H1: Perceived usefulness (PU) impacts on Vietnamese male's buying intention

H2: Perceived ease of use (PEU) impacts on Vietnames male's buying intention.

Social Media Influencers (SMI):

Celebrity endorsement is a popular marketing and advertising strategy used by businesses to promote their brand or product. Celebrities hold significant influence on social networks and occupy a unique position in the advertising landscape due to their constant media attention from fans and followers (McCormick, 2016). Alongside celebrity endorsements, digital celebrities or Social Media Influencers (SMIs) also play a crucial role in advertising on social media platforms. They share their firsthand experiences and opinions about products, establishing a strong connection with their audience (Zafar, Qiu, Li, Wang, & Shahzad, 2021). These influencers have gained prominence with the rise of social media users, and their authenticity makes them more influential in consumers' eyes. They cover diverse areas such as lifestyle, food, entertainment, travel, and more (Kumar & Mirchandani, 2012) (Zoha, 2018) (Zafar, Qiu, Li, Wang, & Shahzad, 2021).

Consumers perceive both celebrity advocates and social media influencers as reference groups, drawing inspiration from their lifestyles and media presence (Boon & Lomere, 2021) (Choi & Rifon, 2012) (Albert, Ambroise, & Valette-Florence, 2017). They see these individuals as experts in the realm of brands and products, influencing their purchasing decisions (Kelman, 1956) (McCormick, 2016). Brands leverage celebrity advocates and social media influencers to lend credibility to their advertising messages or content, as they have established trust with their audience (McCormick, 2016) (Hussain, Priporas, Foroudi, & Dennis, 2020). Moreover, brands recognize these advocates and influencers as crucial players in the competitive advertising landscape, considering their image, attitude, and personality as influential factors that shape brand image and consumer purchase intention (Albert, Ambroise, & Valette-Florence, 2017).

However, previous research indicates that influencer-generated content often reflects consumers' genuine opinions or comments and may not necessarily have explicit advertising objectives, regardless of sponsorship by the brand or company (Evans, Phua, Lim, & Jun, 2017). Furthermore, the use of celebrities or celebrity endorsements does not guarantee the success of a commercial. Olaosebikan's study (2020) revealed that while both celebrity endorsements and non-celebrities (social media influencers) can have a positive impact on the image of a product or brand, there is no significant effect on consumer purchase intention. Hence, this leads to the formulation of the third hypothesis.

H3: Social media influencers impact on Vietnamese male's buying intention.

Advertising Appeal (AA)

The quality and attractiveness of content on social media platforms have a significant influence on how customers perceive the accuracy, completeness, timeliness, and relevance of information shared by companies (Carlson, Rahman, Voola, & De Vries, 2018). When content is innovative, creative, and of high quality, it captures the attention of online consumers and leads to increased engagement and interaction (Dabbous & Barakat, 2020). This content is also believed to be the foundation of consumers' emotions, motivations, behavioral responses, and information processing, ultimately impacting their purchasing decisions (Xiang, Zheng, Lee, & Zhao, 2016) (Chen, Lu, Wang, & Pan, 2018) (Wu, Xin, Li, Yu, & Guo, 2021). Brands focus on delivering excellent content as it contributes to consumer engagement, brand awareness, and brand recall. This encompasses various aspects such as the overall design and theme of the website, the quality of textual information, and the brand's presence in the online environment (Dehghani, Niaki, Ramezani, & Sali, 2016). Consequently, brands create promotional messages and content that inform and persuade consumers, aiming to drive future product purchases.

In the context of this study, the importance of excellent content applies to online campaigns, sales, and significant shopping events on e-commerce platforms. These events are often promoted and shared online by businesses themselves, as well as through the involvement of celebrity endorsers and social media influencers.

Previous research has indicated that advertisements can lose impact if they are visually intrusive or overly focused on content (Goldfarb & Tucker, 2011); (Cramer, 2015). Ads that are "too content-related" can also negatively impact the perceived quality and reliability of a brand or website. Additionally, visually appealing or counterintuitive online ads may not be as effective (Benway, 1988); (Kong, Huang, Scott, Zhang, & Shen, 2018)

H4: An advertisement's advertising appeal impacts on Vietnamese male's buying intention.

Creative Sales Promotions (CSP)

Price holds significant importance for consumers when making purchasing decisions (Liu, Zhou, Shen, Ge, & Jiang, 2021). Online shoppers invest time in exploring and eagerly awaiting discount offers and sales promotions, including coupons, free gifts, and delivery incentives, which they can take advantage of during the checkout process. Flash sales or events that create a sense of urgency also strongly influence consumers, compelling them to quickly decide whether to make a purchase (Liu, Zhou, Shen, Ge, & Jiang, 2021).

Promotions can take various forms, ranging from planned events to unexpected occurrences. Regardless of the event's duration, impulsive decisions are often made due to the fast-paced nature of the promotion (Guan, Cha, Li, Wang, & Yu, 2019). Liu et al.'s (2021) research indicates that as the sale draws near its conclusion, buyers become less rational in their shopping behavior. This is because they must adhere to deadlines set by the brand or seller in order to benefit from the offered discounts or promotions (Wu, Xin, Li, Yu, & Guo, 2021). Vietnamese e-commerce platforms, for instance, offer daily flash discounts throughout their online sales events, generating anticipation among consumers who eagerly await notifications, updates, and reminders.

Even if a product has been available for a considerable time, consumers tend to make their purchases during sale events or when discounts are offered (Wu, Xin, Li, Yu, & Guo, 2021). Vietnamese e-commerce platforms provide a variety of promotions and deals, and customers can even win vouchers and E-commerce Platform Coins through interactive games. Free vouchers are also available, and loyalty programs have been implemented, rewarding loyal customers with additional discounts and vouchers based on their loyalty level, categorized as Classic, Silver, Gold, and Platinum.

Prior studies have suggested that the attractiveness of a discount or promotion acts as a moderator, leading to different behaviors among consumers. These behaviors can be classified as high perceived attractiveness and low perceived attractiveness, which may or may not influence consumers' purchase intention (Santini, Sampaio, Perin, & Vieira, 2015). The fifth hypothesis of the study is as follows:

H5: Creative sales promotions impact on Vietnamese male's buying intention.

Timing (TM)

When organizing an online sales event, businesses take into account the concept of "timing," where exclusive offers are provided for a specific duration (Wu, Xin, Li, Yu, & Guo, 2021). Timing also factors in the type of event or season, including occasions like gift-giving practices. However, a study revealed that the logistical complexity of product delivery can impact the performance of online stores (Zhang, Onal, Das, Helminsky, & Das, 2019). Additionally, cultural influences have been found to shape purchasing behavior, particularly during specific seasons or occasions (Nieves-Rodriguez, Perez-Rivera, Longobardi, & Davis-Pellot, 2017), raising questions about the extent to which brand relevance is connected to the timing of sales events.

Part of promoting an event involves creating campaign materials that resonate with the target audience. However, cultural connotations can vary across regions, leading to differences in purchasing intentions (Nieves-Rodriguez, Perez-Rivera, Longobardi, & Davis-Pellot, 2017). The final hypothesis is as follows:

H6: The timing of an online shopping event has a positive influence on consumers' purchase intention.

The Latent State-Trait Theory and the connection with TAM in this model framework

The underlying theory behind this concept is the Latent State-trait theory, which examines the impact of various marketing stimuli on consumers' purchase intention. It explores how online purchases are influenced by a brand's promotional appeal, including the website environment and the quality of advertising, as well as the interactions between individuals and their personality traits (Zafar, Qiu, Li, Wang, & Shahzad, 2021) (Chen, Lu, Wang, & Pan, 2018). In the Conceptual Framework, four components were identified as independent variables or "state" variables: Social Media Influencers (SMI), Advertising Appeals (AA), Creative Sales Promotions (CSP), and Timing (TM). These variables contribute to the "buying intention," which is the dependent variable or "trait" variable representing a consumer's inclination to make online purchases over a period of time during e-commerce platforms' Discount Programs such as 11.11 and 12.12. Overall, the proposed model explains how each "state" variable influences the "trait" variable.

In this study, a theoretical framework that elucidates the interplay between the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and other key variables, including Social Media Influencers (SMI), Timing (TM), and Advertising Appeal (AA), all underpinned by the latent state-trait theory (LSTT) has been carefully constructed. TAM serves as the foundational model in the framework, focusing on the critical determinants of technology adoption, namely Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEU). The delineations of SMI, TM, AA, and CSP are expounded within the contextual framework of employing technology for the purposes of survival and advancement. Building upon TAM, incorporate SMI, TM, and AA as influential factors shaping users' perceptions and intentions. SMI is posited to influence both PU and PEU, thereby impacting the users' ultimate buying intention - a relationship derived from LSTT. Additionally, TM is proposed to have a direct influence on buying intention, considering the temporal aspect of online shopping events. Lastly, AA is introduced as a factor that directly affects buying intention within the TAM framework. By structuring the theoretical

framework in this manner, a comprehensive understanding of how these external variables relate to the TAM model and, subsequently, to users' online shopping intentions was provided.

Material and Methods:

Research Design, Population and Samples:

Respondents came from all three areas of Vietnam: North, Central, and South. The study's target population includes 619 male respondents between the ages of 18 and 50. Respondents are Millennials and Generation Z males because the majority of them are exposed to online advertising and are more likely to purchase products online, and because these generations can easily adapt to the emergence of digital technology and are active on various social media platforms. The researchers utilized random sampling for convenience.

The researchers began data gathering with online survey questions using Google Forms because it is one of the safest and easiest to install data collection technologies, and most people in Vietnam are familiar with it. All responses were then saved in a Google Sheets file that only the researchers could access. Questionnaires were distributed to responders via email CRM systems and social media platforms such as Facebook and Zalo. When the target number of responses was reached, the results were collected, and statistical methods were used and processed by SPSS software.

Research Measurement

This study used questionnaires to reach Vietnamese male consumers from the south to the north of the country. The study was divided into two phases, the first of which assessed the questionnaire on 30 individuals. Before proceeding to the actual study round, the data was initially checked using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to keep or eliminate improper variables. Round 2 had a higher number of samples, with 619 collected from across the country.

Data Analysis

Descriptive Statistics were employed in the study to examine the perceptions of selected individuals and determine the effectiveness of each variable. Furthermore, The

Multi-Linear Regression (MLR) was used to demonstrate the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable. It has enabled researchers to determine the impact of each variable on Vietnamese male’s buying intention. For the regression analysis, the ENTER approach was employed. All variables were incorporated at the same time, yielding statistical results. The research findings were analyzed using VIF and Beta coefficients to evaluate the influence of dependent variables on independent variables or to discover which factors influence Vietnamese males' buying intentions for personal care items.

Validity of the Study

In this study, the validity of the questionnaire measurement was tested using the index of item-objective congruence (I.O.C) built by Rovinelli and Hambleton (1977). The questionnaire was evaluated by 1 director in e-commerce, 1 marketing manager, 1 academic researcher, and 1 Ph.D. in communication who is a university lecturer. As a consequence, the I.O.C equaled 0.84, indicating that the questionnaire was appropriate for data mining.

Reliability of the Study

According to the reliability test results in Table 1, all Cronbach's Alpha coefficients after two rounds are greater than 0.7 in the pilot test, meeting the research's reliability standards and indicating a reliable scale for practical research.

Table 1: Results of alpha reliability tests

| Coding | Variables | Round 1 | | Round 2 | |
|--------|---------------------------|------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|
| | | Cronbach’s Alpha | N of item | Cronbach’s Alpha | N of item |
| PU | Perceived Usefulness | 0.866 | 5 | 0.877 | 5 |
| PEU | Perceived Ease of Use | 0.731 | 5 | 0.813 | 5 |
| SMI | Social Media Influencers | 0.821 | 6 | 0.834 | 5 |
| AA | Advertising Appeal | 0.762 | 6 | 0.832 | 5 |
| CSP | Creative Sales Promotions | 0.831 | 4 | 0.811 | 4 |
| TM | Timing | 0.867 | 4 | 0.857 | 4 |

Results and Discussion

Results of Descriptive Statistics on Survey Respondents

Table 2: Demographic Information

| Variables | Description | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Ages | 18-24 | 245 | 39.6% |
| | 25-30 | 210 | 33.9% |
| | 31-40 | 113 | 18.3% |
| | 41-50 | 51 | 8.2% |
| | Total | 619 | 100% |
| Occupation | Student | 251 | 40.5% |
| | Officer | 201 | 32.5% |
| | Employee | 98 | 15.8% |
| | Business owner | 45 | 7.3% |
| | Other | 24 | 3.9% |
| | Total | 619 | 100% |
| Monthly Income (VND) | <10.000.000 VND | 268 | 43.3% |
| | 10.000.001 – 20.000.000 VND | 312 | 50.4% |
| | 20.000.001 – 30.000.000 VND | 23 | 3.7% |
| | > 30.000.000 VND | 16 | 2.6% |
| | Total | 619 | 100% |

Table 2 reveals the demographic scores of the survey participants, showcasing their age, occupation, and income. The majority of respondents fell within the 18-24 age range (39.6%), followed closely by those aged 25-30 (33.9%) and those over 30 (36.5%). Students dominated the job categories with percentage of 40.5%, followed by officers (32.5%), employees (15.8%), business owners (7.3%), and others (3.9%). In terms of income, a significant portion had earnings below 10 million dong account for 43.3%, with the majority falling between 10-20 million dong (50.45). Higher income brackets of 20-35 million dong (3.7%) and above 35 million dong (2.6%) were represented by smaller percentages. This diverse tapestry of demographics paints a vivid picture of the participants' varied backgrounds and aspirations.

Results of Descriptive Statistics on Examined Variables:

Based on the information presented in Table 3, the observed variables demonstrated a mean value exceeding 3.0, while the standard deviation (S.D) remained below 1.0. Additionally, all Cronbach's Alpha coefficients surpassed 0.7, indicating high reliability of the scales utilized in the subsequent stages of the study. Notably, among the variables, "Creative Sales Promotions" exhibited the highest mean value, with a recorded value of 4.421.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics and Alpha Reliability Test of Examined Variables

| Scales | Mean | S.D. | No of items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|---------------------------|-------|--------|-------------|------------------|
| Perceived Usefulness | 3.312 | 0.4781 | 5 | 0.873 |
| Perceived Ease of Use | 3.011 | 0.5419 | 5 | 0.841 |
| Social Media Influencers | 4.034 | 0.5621 | 5 | 0.890 |
| Advertising Appeal | 3.981 | 0.5872 | 4 | 0.821 |
| Creative Sales Promotions | 4.421 | 0.5713 | 4 | 0.871 |
| Timing | 3.009 | 0.5210 | 4 | 0.861 |

Exploratory Factor Analysis - EFA:

The results of the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) categorized the outcomes into two groups based on their similarity in criteria. Table 4 identified the criteria with factor loadings equal to or greater than 0.5, which were retained. Consequently, a total of 6 groups were formed from the initial 28 criteria. It was found that the factor loadings of the observed variables in each scale had significantly increased and met the acceptable threshold (factor loading > 0.5), as per the requirements of the approach. This EFA analysis allows the author to incorporate these findings in the subsequent steps of the study.

Table 4: Results of exploratory factor analysis EFA

| OV(s) | COMPONENTS | | | | | |
|-------|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| SMI2 | 0.812 | | | | | |
| SMI3 | 0.830 | | | | | |
| SMI6 | 0.764 | | | | | |
| SMI1 | 0.874 | | | | | |
| SMI4 | 0.819 | | | | | |
| CSP4 | | 0.792 | | | | |
| CSP2 | | 0.762 | | | | |
| CSP3 | | 0.678 | | | | |
| CSP6 | | 0.798 | | | | |
| CSP5 | | 0.703 | | | | |
| AA1 | | | 0.799 | | | |
| AA3 | | | 0.771 | | | |
| AA4 | | | 0.763 | | | |
| AA5 | | | 0.753 | | | |
| PU1 | | | | 0.821 | | |
| PU2 | | | | 0.861 | | |
| PU4 | | | | 0.761 | | |
| PU3 | | | | 0.721 | | |
| PU5 | | | | 0.761 | | |
| TM4 | | | | | 0.621 | |
| TM2 | | | | | 0.707 | |
| TM3 | | | | | 0.691 | |
| TM1 | | | | | 0.600 | |
| PEU2 | | | | | | 0.801 |
| PEU3 | | | | | | 0.721 |
| PEU5 | | | | | | 0.661 |
| PEU1 | | | | | | 0.782 |
| PEU4 | | | | | | 0.713 |

Sig. = 0.001; KMO = 0.791; Principle Axis Factoring, Promax Rotation

Results of Hypothesis Testing

Correlation analysis

Table 5: Correlations between variables

| | | PU | PEU | SMI | AA | CSP | TM | BI |
|------------|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| PU | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .071 | .281** | .255** | .312** | .371** | .378** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 | .001 | .003 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | Interpretation | | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| PEU | Pearson Correlation | .075 | 1 | .179** | .231** | .189** | .242** | .351** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 | | .000 | .001 | .002 | .000 | .000 |
| | Interpretation | + | | + | + | + | + | + |
| SMI | Pearson Correlation | .238** | .176** | 1 | .321** | .221** | .321** | .114** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | | .001 | .003 | .000 | .000 |
| | Interpretation | + | + | | + | + | + | + |
| AA | Pearson Correlation | .233** | .215** | .245** | 1 | .145** | .234** | .157** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .001 | .000 | | .001 | .000 | .003 |
| | Interpretation | + | + | + | | + | + | + |
| CSP | Pearson Correlation | .178** | .189** | .235** | .143** | 1 | .361** | .312** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .002 | .001 | .003 | .000 | | .001 | .002 |
| | Interpretation | + | + | + | + | | + | + |
| TM | Pearson Correlation | .312** | .298** | .310** | .345** | .321** | 1 | .231** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | .002 | .001 | | .001 |
| | Interpretation | + | + | + | + | + | | + |
| BI | Pearson Correlation | .198** | .231** | .156** | .231** | .178** | .089** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 | .000 | .003 | .001 | .002 | .000 | |
| | Interpretation | + | + | + | + | + | + | |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

“+” : Positive correlation

“-” : Negative correlation

In Table 5, the Pearson coefficient (r) demonstrates a positive correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable, indicating that an increase in each independent variable corresponds to an increase in the dependent variable. The Pearson correlation coefficients between the predictor and the dependent variable range between 0.3 and 0.5, signifying a significant positive correlation. This is further supported by the sig 2-tailed

value, which is 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the correlation results are statistically significant at the 5% level. These findings meet the necessary criteria for conducting regression analysis.

Regression analysis

Table 6: Regression analysis results

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig | Collinearity Statistics | |
|------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|-------------------------|-------|
| | Beta | Std. error | Beta | | | Tolerance | VIF |
| (Constant) | .548 | .212 | | | .000 | | |
| 1 PU | .031 | .031 | .029 | 3.018 | .000 | .832 | 1.013 |
| PEU | .092 | .029 | .067 | 4.310 | .000 | .773 | 1.031 |
| SMI | .379 | .033 | .366 | 4.071 | .000 | .859 | 1.309 |
| AA | .441 | .041 | .372 | 4.521 | .000 | .844 | 1.253 |
| CSP | .631 | .037 | .597 | 7.911 | .000 | .851 | 1.421 |
| TM | .527 | .025 | .477 | 3.001 | .000 | .824 | 1.331 |

Adjusted R2: 0.842

Durbin-Watson: 1.933

ANOVAa (sig.): 0.000

Dependent Variable: Buying Intention (BI)

Based on the information provided in Table 6, it can be inferred that the adjusted R-square value of 0.842 ($p < 0.001$) indicates that the variation in purchase intention can be attributed to the influence of six independent variables, explaining approximately 84.2% of the observed change. The Durbin-Watson coefficient of 1.933 falls within an acceptable range, suggesting the absence of significant autocorrelation in the analysis. Additionally, the ANOVA significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05) implies a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables, signifying that the independent variables have the ability to account for changes in the dependent variable (BI).

Moreover, the VIF coefficients for the dependent variables (PU, PEU, SMI, AA, CSP, and TM) varied between 1 and 10, indicating the absence of multicollinearity in the study. Consequently, the interdependencies among the independent variables do not impact the interpretation, analysis, and conclusion of the linear regression model. Overall, the linear regression model can be considered well-structured and statistically significant. In this study, the regression model, featuring unnormalized beta coefficients, is expressed as follows:

$$BI = 0.548 + 0.031PU + 0.092PEU + 0.379SMI + 0.441AA + 0.361SP + 0.527TM + \epsilon$$

Derived from the aforementioned equation, it is discerned that the beta coefficient corresponding to TM holds the highest degree of significance, amounting to 0.527. Put differently, an increment of 1 unit in TM corresponds to a proportional increase of 0.527 units in buying intention (BI). Consequently, TM exerts the most pronounced impact on buying intentions (BI), with the other factors encompassing AA, SMI, CSP, PEU, and PU, occupying secondary roles in this regard.

Hypothesis Testing Results

Based on the aforementioned equation, presented here are the outcomes of hypothesis testing.

Table 7: Results of Hypothesis Testing

| | Description | Result |
|------|--|-----------|
| HP#1 | Perceived usefulness (PU) impacts on Vietnamese male’s buying intention | Supported |
| HP#2 | Perceived ease of use (PEU) impacts on Vietnamese male’s buying intention | Supported |
| HP#3 | Social media influencers (SMI) impact on Vietnamese male’s buying intention | Supported |
| HP#4 | An advertisement’s advertising appeal (AA) impacts on Vietnamese male’s buying intention | Supported |
| HP#5 | Creative sales promotions (CSP) impact on Vietnamese male’s buying intention. | Supported |
| HP#6 | The timing (TM) of an online shopping event has a positive influence on consumers’ purchase intention. | Supported |

Discussions:

Discussions Based on TAM and Past Studies

As mentioned earlier, it has been established that PU plays a role in influencing Vietnamese men's propensity to purchase personal care items on e-commerce platforms, particularly during big events. Consequently, the first hypothesis (H1) is supported. However, the factor of PU ($\beta = 0.031, p < 0.001$) appeared to have the least significant influence on consumer intention-making in this study, indicating a minor impact on the purchasing inclinations of Vietnamese men. Additionally, the second element in the TAM model, PEU ($\beta = 0.092, p < 0.001$), has a relatively minor impact on the purchasing intentions of Vietnamese men, which contradicts findings from previous research studies. This finding is considered new, as the study focuses on Vietnamese men, revealing that they are less influenced by PU and PEU. While it is important for Vietnamese online sellers to develop useful products and services to attract more customers, this becomes less crucial when the customer base consists primarily of men. Despite the weak impact, a small group of Vietnamese men tends to make purchases when the service provider offers home delivery or free delivery. Furthermore, to enhance the perceived usefulness for Vietnamese male customers, business managers should provide comprehensive product information, fast order processing, price comparison tools, and product reviews (Zhou, Dai, & Zhang, 2007), (Black, Lockett, Ennew, Winklhofer, & McKechnie, 2002). The wide array of online products can often overwhelm customers during the shopping process. To encourage Vietnamese customers to shop more online, business managers should improve the customer experience through effective customer support. According to Zhou and colleagues (2007) businesses can foster customer loyalty by personalizing the shopping experience based on individual preferences and behavior. Additionally, the e-commerce website interface must be user-friendly.

Discussions Based on the effect of each variable.

The findings of the study reveal that Timing and Creative Sales Promotion have a positive impact on the purchasing intention of Vietnamese men during the Big Online Shopping Event in the Discount Program on e-commerce platforms. While Social Media Influencers and Advertising Appeals are not the most influential factors in influencing the intention of Vietnamese men to buy personal care products, it was observed that social media influencers

still have a significant effect on their purchase intention on e-commerce platforms. This outcome aligns with a previous study conducted by Le (2023), which found that factors like expertise, popularity, and the quality of information provided by social media influencers greatly influence Vietnamese consumers.

Furthermore, the results demonstrate that Advertising Appeal plays a significant role in shaping the purchase intention of Vietnamese men in this study. This finding contradicts previous studies (Goldfarb & Tucker, 2011) (Cramer, 2015) (Kong, Huang, Scott, Zhang, & Shen, 2018) that suggested that overly relevant or visually appealing campaign materials can reduce the effectiveness of an advertisement and impact the perceived quality and credibility of a brand. However, this result supports previous studies (Xiang, Zheng, Lee, & Zhao, 2016) (Chen, Lu, Wang, & Pan, 2018) (Wu, Xin, Li, Yu, & Guo, 2021).

Moreover, Creative Sales Promotion emerged as a significant factor influencing the purchase intention of Vietnamese men. This finding aligns with the relevant literature cited in this study (Guan, Cha, Li, Wang, & Yu, 2019) (Wu, Xin, Li, Yu, & Guo, 2021), which discusses the influence of offers such as coupons, free shipping, cashback incentives, and other promotional strategies on motivating shoppers to make purchases, even for products that have been in the market for a while. The timing of event-based discounts was also identified as a crucial and influential factor among the examined variables, impacting the purchase intention of consumers. This finding is consistent with previous studies (Wu, Xin, Li, Yu, & Guo, 2021) (Nieves-Rodriguez, Perez-Rivera, Longobardi, & Davis-Pellot, 2017) where it was discussed that timing plays a significant role, especially during personal or special occasions and gift-giving seasons such as Christmas.

Conclusions

The present study has demonstrated that the obtained findings can explain the factors influencing the purchase of personal care products by Vietnamese men on e-commerce platforms. The findings from the correlation analysis indicate that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use influence their purchase intention.

In the current pandemic situation where consumer behavior is impacted across all segments, online shopping has become a vital tool for individuals to make purchases. The research findings provide valuable insights for marketing professionals and practitioners in

managing more effective campaigns for online shopping events. As e-commerce platforms develop their events and strategies, variables such as social media influencers, ad appeal, creative sales promotions, and timing show varying effects on purchase intention. The study reveals that users are greatly influenced by timing and creative sales promotions. However, timing exerts the greatest influence on purchase intention compared to creative promotions. Timing is of the essence. The study underscores the pivotal role timing plays in influencing purchase intentions. E-commerce platforms must carefully analyze market trends, consumer behavior patterns, and cultural events to identify optimal timeframes for their campaigns. Aligning promotions with moments of heightened consumer activity and interest can yield substantial results.

Creative sales promotions emerge as another potent tool in the arsenal of online shopping campaigns. Crafting innovative and advertising appeal that resonate with the specific needs and preferences of Vietnamese male consumers can stimulate purchase intent. Whether it's exclusive discounts, limited-time offers, or bundled deals, the creative execution of promotions can trigger urgency and excitement, translating into increased conversions.

Additionally, the study shows that both social media influencers influence Vietnamese male's buying intention. Marketers can leverage these findings to increase purchase intent, but it may not be entirely suitable for building brand image and increasing brand awareness. The role of social media influencers cannot be underestimated. These individuals possess the capacity to sway consumer decisions significantly. Partnering with influencers whose audience aligns with the target demographic of personal care products for Vietnamese men can be a game-changer. By leveraging their reach and credibility, e-commerce platforms can amplify their marketing efforts, generating heightened purchase intentions. Leveraging social media influencers, devising innovative sales promotions, and meticulously timing their campaigns can propel online shopping events to new heights.

Overall, the significance of social media influencers and the appeal of advertising underscore the importance of planning future events. Marketing professionals can utilize this discovery to effectively allocate campaign budgets to other strategies that can enhance purchase intent during shopping events. Since both creative sales promotion and timing influence the Vietnamese male's purchasing intention, they serve as powerful tools for marketers to develop strategies that align with their desired brand targets, leading to increased market share and profits. While timing has a stronger effect on purchase intent, the benefits of implementing a creative sales promotion strategy should not be overlooked. Considering

that these factors have been observed from a macro perspective, future research could delve into the micro perspective, exploring factors that drive purchase intention, such as identifying the perfect timing and employing creative and effective promotions. While this study focuses on Vietnamese male consumers, the principles of effective marketing through influencers, promotions, and timing are universally applicable, offering a roadmap for success in the dynamic realm of e-commerce. As the digital landscape evolves, continuous research and adaptation will be vital to staying ahead of the curve and ensuring sustained growth in online sales. While this study focuses on Vietnamese male consumers, the principles of effective marketing through influencers, promotions, and timing are universally applicable, offering a roadmap for success in the dynamic realm of e-commerce. As the digital landscape evolves, continuous research and adaptation will be vital to staying ahead of the curve and ensuring sustained growth in online sales.

There are certain limitations that can be addressed in future research. This study primarily focused on male consumers, so it is essential to replicate the study for Vietnamese consumers as a whole. The survey data should include a broader population, encompassing individuals beyond students and those aged 18-30. Therefore, future studies can employ qualitative and quantitative methods to collect comprehensive data from the general population across all age groups in Vietnam, providing deeper insights into the perceptions and intentions of Vietnamese individuals regarding their e-commerce purchasing behaviors. Additionally, future researchers should investigate other potential factors and gain a thorough understanding of online shopping dynamics. It is crucial to note that the results are specific to men in Vietnam. Furthermore, this research could be extended by incorporating the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) in the study.

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